

Zechariah 10:1-11:3
Heb 423
Class 4, February 2, 2026

11:1	
פֶּתַח לְבָנוֹן דִּלְתֵּיךְ וְתֹאכַל אֵשׁ בְּאַרְזֶיךָ:	
Open, O Lebanon, your doors And fire will consume your cedars <LSB: That a fire may consume your cedars/ESV: that the fire may devour your cedars!>	
פֶּתַח (פֶּתַח)	Qal imperative 2ms Imperative: R1 shewah (rather than qamets for perfect 3ms) Note 1 To open
וְתֹאכַל (אָכַל) S: אֵשׁ - <i>feminine noun</i>	Qal imperfect Waw Conjunctive 3fs ✓ 3fs: Lebanon is feminine To consume/devour/eat
בְּאַרְזֶיךָ (אַרֶּז)	Prep + Noun mp Constr + 2 ms PS

Note 1: In Zechariah 11:1, פֶּתַח (petah) is a Qal Imperative 2ms because of its vowel structure and the lack of a final vowel marker required for the perfect tense.

Here is the technical breakdown of why it is not a Qal Perfect 3ms:

1. The Vowel Pattern (Pattach vs. Qamets)

Qal Perfect 3ms: The standard form is פָּתַח (pāṭaḥ). It uses a Qamets (long 'a') under the first root letter.

Qal Imperative 2ms: The form is פֶּתַח (pēṭaḥ). It uses a Sheva (the two dots) under the first root letter.

Because the text has a Sheva under the פ, it follows the imperative pattern for Lamed-Guttural roots (roots ending in ת or ע).

2. Syllable Structure

In the Perfect 3ms (pā-ṭaḥ), the first syllable is "open" and receives a long vowel. In the Imperative (pē-ṭaḥ), the first syllable is "reduced," which is characteristic of commands in Hebrew where the energy of the word shifts toward the end.

3. Contextual Necessity

The verse is an apostrophe (a direct address to an inanimate object). The prophet is shouting a command to the personified land: "Open [thou] your doors, O Lebanon!"

A Perfect form ("Lebanon has opened its doors") would describe a completed historical fact.

An Imperative form ("Lebanon, open your doors!") sets the stage for the dramatic judgment sequence that follows.

Quick Comparison

Feature	פֶּתַח (Imperative)	פָּתַח (Perfect)
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First Vowel

Sheva (reduced)

Qamets (long 'a')

Meaning

"Open!"

"He opened"

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11:2	
הִלֵּל בְּרוֹשׁ כִּי־נָפַל אֶרֶז אֲשֶׁר אֲדָרִים שָׁדָדוּ הִלִּילוּ אֶלּוֹנֵי בָשָׁן כִּי יָרַד יַעַר הַבָּצִיר: Active here ————— 77 ————— (circled)	
Wail, O cypress For the cedar <u>has</u> fallen For the mighty (trees) have been destroyed <ESV: for the glorious trees are ruined!> Wail, O oaks of Bashan For the thick forest <u>has</u> gone down <LSB: For the impenetrable forest has come down/ESV: For the thick forest has been felled>	
הִלֵּל (יִלֵּל)	Hiphil (causative) imperative 2ms ✓ To wail/howl
בְּרוֹשׁ (בָּרוֹשׁ)	Noun ms Abs Cypress/fir tree
נָפַל (נָפַל)	Qal perfect 3ms To fall
אֲדָרִים (אֲדִיר)	Adj mp Abs The mighty Intensive
שָׁדָדוּ (שָׁדַד)	Hophal (passive) perfect 3cp To destroy/spoil Hophal of Hos 10
הִלִּילוּ (יִלֵּל)	Hiphil imperative 2mp ✓ Hiphil imperative: R2 hireq yod Note 1 To howl
אֶלּוֹנֵי (אֶלּוֹן)	Noun mp Constr Oaks
יָרַד (יָרַד)	Qal perfect 3ms To go down
הַבָּצִיר (בָּצַר)	Noun ms Abs Of the vintage
יַעַר	Noun ms Constr Forest
הַבָּצִיר (בָּצַר)	Noun ms Abs ESV: Thick/LSB: Impenetrable/BLB: Of the vintage

Note 1: In Zechariah 11:2, the form הִלִּילוּ (hêlîlû) is a Hiphil Imperative 2mp rather than a Perfect 3cp because of the vowel length and the rhetorical context.

While they look identical in many roots, here is how you tell them apart:

1. The Vowel under the Middle Radical

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Hiphil Imperative: Frequently retains the long Hireq-Yod (î) sound in the second syllable to emphasize the command.

Hiphil Perfect: In many hollow or weak roots, the Perfect 3cp might look similar, but the Imperative is signaled here by the sequence of commands in the chapter.

2. Parallelism and Context

The most decisive factor is the poetic structure of Zechariah 11:1-2.

Verse 1 begins with a clear imperative: פֶּתַח (petah - "Open!").

Verse 2 continues this string of commands: הִלֵּל (hêlîl - "Wail, O cypress!") and הִלִּילוּ (hêlîlû - "Wail, O oaks of Bashan!").

If this were Perfect 3cp, it would mean "The oaks of Bashan have wailed," which contradicts the prophetic summons for them to begin mourning because the cedars have just fallen.

3. Root Behavior (לל)

The root is לל (y-l-l). In the Hiphil, the initial yod transforms into a vav (written as a Tsere-Vav or Holem sound), resulting in the הִ- (hê-) prefix. This prefix is consistent for both the Perfect and the Imperative in this specific root, so the imperative mood is determined by the surrounding "call to mourn."

Form	Parsing	Translation
הִלִּילוּ	Hiphil Imperative 2mp	" Wail! " (A command)
הִלִּילוּ	Hiphil Perfect 3cp	"They wailed" (A statement)

In the Lexham Analytical Lexicon, this is categorized as an imperative to match the preceding "Open!" and "Wail!" (singular) addressed to the trees.

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11:3	
	קֹל יִלְלַת הָרָעִים כִּי שִׁדְדָה אֲדָרְתָם קֹל שִׁאֲגַת כְּפִירִים כִּי שִׁדְדָה גְּאוֹן הַיַּרְדֵּן: ס
The sound of the wail of the shepherds <LSB: There is a sound of the shepherds' wail/ESV: The sound of the wail of the shepherds> For their glory <u>is</u> destroyed <LSB: For their might is destroyed/ESV: For their glory is ruined> The sound of the roar of the young lions <LSB: There is a sound of the young lions' roar/ESV: The sound of the roar of the lions> For the <u>pride</u> of the Jordan <u>is</u> destroyed <ESV: For the thicket of the Jordan is ruined>	
יִלְלָה (יִלְלַת)	Noun fs Constr Wailing/Howl
רָעָה (הָרָעִים)	Qal Ptc mp The shepherds
שִׁדְדָה (שִׁדְד)	Pual (passive) perfect 3fs Pual: qibbuts, R2 dagesh To destroy/spoil
אֲדָרְתָם (אֲדָרַת)	Noun fs Constr + 3mp PS LSB: might/ESV: glory
שִׁאֲגָה (שִׁאֲגַת)	Noun fs Constr Roar
כְּפִירִים (כְּפִיר)	Noun mp Abs Of the young lions
שִׁדְדָה (שִׁדְד)	Pual (passive) perfect 3ms Pual: qibbuts, R2 dagesh To destroy/ESV: ruin/spoil
גְּאוֹן (גְּאוֹן)	Noun ms Constr LSB: Pride/jungle/ESV: thicket

also geographic
high
thickets
double
extended